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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/607,389	06/26/2003	Timothy M. Crowder	9336-7	6209
20792	7590	02/07/2006		
MYERS BIGEL SIBLEY & SAJOVEC PO BOX 37428 RALEIGH, NC 27627			EXAMINER NICOLAS, FREDERICK C	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3754	

DATE MAILED: 02/07/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/607,389	Applicant(s) CROWDER ET AL.	
	Examiner Frederick C. Nicolas	Art Unit 3754	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
 - If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
 - Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09 January 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 31-59 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 31-40, 44 and 48-59 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 41 and 43 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 42 and 45-47 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 31-59 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 41,43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Avrahami 6,328,033 in view of Gonda et al. 5,743,250.

Avrahami discloses a method of dispensing a dry powder (col. 1, ll. 3-6), which comprises the steps of providing an elongate flow channel (26) having a powder support floor formed of a flexible material (23,25) and inlet and outlet ports (41,43), directing a quantity of dry powder (66) into the inlet port of the elongate flow channel, vibrating the material with an electric excitation signal so that the material deflects upwardly, flowing the dry powder out of the outlet port responsive the vibrating step (col. 6, ll. 49-67 onto col. 7, ll. 1-63). Avrahami lacks that the flexible material being a piezoelectric material. Gonda et al. teach the use of piezoelectric crystal material for use in a medical inhaler device for vibrating a medicinal powder in order to deaggregate it and deliver it to a patient (column 25, line 19 through column 26, lines 60).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the apparatus of Avrahami by altering the walls (**23, 25**) to be made of a piezoelectric crystal material because it is well known in the art, as

taught by Gonda et al., to use piezoelectric crystal material in order to vibrate a medicinal matter for delivery to a patient.

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claims 31-40,44,48-59 are allowed.
4. Claims 42,45-47 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments filed 1/9/2006 have been fully considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Frederick C. Nicolas whose telephone number is (571)-272-4931. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Y. Mar, can be reached on 571-272-4906. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only.

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For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

FN
January 30, 2006

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'F. Nicolas', followed by the date '1/30/06' and a small flourish.

Frederick C. Nicolas
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3754